

HOW TO... Publish a web gallery

Make sure friends can view your snaps online in an efficient and user-friendly format. Steve Haines explains how to publish a gallery with Serif MediaPlus, on the cover disc

SERIF MEDIAPLUS 2



Image galleries are a great way to present media files to a wider audience, either over the World Wide Web or on a disc. They allow viewers to see a thumbnail index of the images and make selections without having to download or open all the files. Serif MediaPlus 2, the full version of which is on this month's cover disc, makes it easy to create and publish an image gallery, and in this walkthrough we'll show you how.

MediaPlus provides a wide range of preset page templates and styles to help you create your web gallery. The layout can also be customised before you publish your gallery to a specific folder, either on a web server or a local disk. Either way, MediaPlus takes care of building the HTML pages and exporting the files.

1 When MediaPlus first opens, it displays sample pictures in the album window in the centre of the screen and photos from your My Pictures folder in the Browser window underneath. To browse to a different folder, use the Folders tab in the Explorer window on the left. The other tabs in this window are Favorites, which lets you store short cuts to files, folders and albums; Download, which filters webpages to gather media files; and Search.

To create a new album, go to File, New. Select the folder that contains your pictures in the Explorer window, and drag the pictures you want to appear in your album to the blank album window. If the image you want has the wrong orientation, select Edit, Rotate and choose whether you want to turn the picture to the left or the right.

Once you've selected all the pictures for your album, go to File, Save and choose a name for your album. By default, the album will be saved in MediaPlus's .SMA format.

2 The album you've created contains thumbnail links to the original files. This means that if you subsequently move the original image to another location or rename the folder in which it's stored, the link will be broken. To prevent this happening with the images for your web gallery, you can move or copy the original files to a new folder, to which the thumbnails will link. To do this, select Gather from the File menu. In the dialog box that appears, select the location for the files, and choose to move or copy them. Ensure that the Update thumbnail links box is ticked. Click OK.

3 You can give your thumbnails captions that will appear in your web album. To do this, highlight the picture and choose Add Comments from the Actions menu (or right-click and select Add Comments) and type in the text you want to appear in the Caption box. You can also choose to add the date the photo was taken, notes and keywords in this dialog box. These will help you – and users of your site – to find the images more easily.

4 You're now ready to create your album. From the Actions menu, select Publish To Web, From Album. The Edit Web Page Layout box will be displayed. You can customise how your webpage will look using the templates provided. Choose a template and a colour from

the choices on the right, and a style from the selection on the left. The main preview window updates automatically when you click on a template or style.

5 You can customise the layout you've chosen, for example by changing the colours of the backgrounds, the size of thumbnails, the font used for captions, and much more. Move the mouse around the preview window, and the Hintline at the bottom will tell you which elements can be changed. Right-click on an element to edit it. You will probably want to experiment until you find the layout and style you want. In our example, we've chosen to edit the caption boxes under the images by altering the style and colour of the border around the box and the colour of the background.

You can also change the font used in the captions. Choose Description Font from the Edit menu in the Edit Web Page Layout window and select the font and font size that you want.

6 Once you have your webpage looking how you want, click the Publish to Web button at the top of the window. You'll then be asked to specify your FTP account details. Enter the relevant information in the boxes provided and click OK. MediaPlus then connects to the remote server. With some online services, you'll need to use the service's proprietary log-on software to establish a connection. You'll see a message when all the files have been copied successfully. This may take some time, depending on your connection. Finally, check that the album has been successfully uploaded to your site. **CS**

